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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7901  
INFO RUEHBE/AMEMBASSY BELMOPAN PRIORITY 0001  
RUEHWN/AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PRIORITY 0579  
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN PRIORITY 0360  
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON PRIORITY 1005  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0935  
RUEHBH/AMEMBASSY NASSAU PRIORITY 0413  
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO PRIORITY 0027  
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN PRIORITY 0421  
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO PRIORITY 0419  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0025  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 000695

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/22/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [XL](#) [CA](#)  
SUBJECT: TBI: CANADA LOOKING TO INCREASE CARIBBEAN  
ENGAGEMENT

REF: A. STATE 51747  
[1](#)B. OTTAWA 491  
[1](#)C. OTTAWA 467

Classified By: PolMinCouns Scott Bellard, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Canada is increasing its engagement in the Caribbean in order to bolster prosperity, security, and democracy. The move reflects the government's desire to recast Canada as a capable and reliable "player" in the hemisphere. Canadian government officials over the past year have highlighted Haiti and the Eastern Caribbean as areas of particular focus, and have expressed a willingness to collaborate with the U.S. there, and elsewhere, in the Caribbean. The Canadians are limited, however, by a lack of security assistance "architecture" for bilateral projects -- available trainers, logistics pipelines, and facilities. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Since it came into office in 2006, Prime Minister Harper's Conservative government has emphasized the need for Canada to re-engage the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (ref b). The PM's July 2007 trip to Barbados (as well as three states in Latin America) signaled a greater focus on his government's three key objectives for the region: to increase prosperity; to enhance security; and, to entrench democratic government. At bilateral meetings, Canadian officials frequently note the high degree of alignment in the Canadian and U.S. strategies towards the Caribbean (with the exception of Cuba) and have regularly suggested that both sides look at ways to deepen collaboration.

The Region  
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[1](#)3. (C) The government has already increased political engagement with the Caribbean. In 2008, Canada is hosting a visit of CARICOM leaders, a meeting of the Caribbean Development Bank, and the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas (CDMA). It has also pledged to increase its participation in joint maritime operations in the Caribbean under the auspices of Joint Interagency Task Force - South (JIATF-S). Canada's foreign affairs and security



bureaucracies, however, are struggling to work out how best to pursue the government's objectives in ways that will deliver tangible, measurable results to the region.

## Haiti

¶4. (C) Canadian officials often remind their American counterparts that Canada and the U.S. are Haiti's two top donors, and that both countries will have to remain engaged for the long haul in order to deal with endemic security and health risks there, to include extreme poverty, drug abuse, and the corrosive effects of narcotics trafficking. Canadian aid to Haiti amounts to a five-year, \$555 million commitment, making it the country's number-two aid priority after Afghanistan (ref c). The most recent tranche of security assistance to Haiti included five projects totaling C\$19.1 million:

- rebuilding police training schools (C\$3.3 million);
- rebuilding and equipping 21 police stations in the Departement du Sud (C\$3.5 million);
- QDepartement du Sud (C\$3.5 million);
- building a border post at Belladere (C\$2.4 million);
- training and technical assistance for legislation drafting on human migration and trafficking (C\$2.9 million); and,
- construction of a coast guard base at Les Cayes on the south coast of Haiti (C\$7 million).

¶5. (SBU) Looking ahead, Canada plans to encourage more international, and particularly Latin American, burden-sharing in Haiti.

## The Eastern Caribbean

¶6. (C) Canadian governments once spent considerable sums on police, corrections, and other rule of law training, mentoring, and infrastructure projects throughout the Eastern Caribbean, most of which was directed via its diplomatic missions in Bridgetown and Kingston. Canada supported the U.S.-led Regional Security System (RSS) airborne maritime surveillance program by training C-26 flight crew members and sensor operators in 1999. Foreign Affairs officials have informally expressed an interest in perhaps re-engaging the RSS along with the U.S. on maritime surveillance or some other high-impact project. Further, given Canada's new role as the host of the Egmont Group, and as the home base of many retail private banks operating in the Caribbean, there may also be an opportunity to partner with Canada in a renewed effort to bolster regulatory oversight of Caribbean offshore financial services sectors. Canada could also bring an assortment of viable initiatives to the table through its existing Counter-terrorism Capacity Building Program.

## Comment:

¶7. (C) Prime Minister Harper's interest in re-directing Canadian engagement from doing a little bit everywhere in the world to focusing on fewer, more relevant security challenges in the hemisphere presents welcome opportunities for bilateral collaboration in the Caribbean. Despite its generous multi-billion dollar investments in defense and security over the past two years, Canada remains hindered by a lack of adequate "architecture" required to deliver security assistance bilaterally, however. To overcome this shortfall, Canada has traditionally delivered much of its assistance via the UN and other multilateral organizations. The current government wants to put a more distinctively Canadian stamp on its security assistance, and Canadian officials are increasingly under the gun to recapture Canada's role as a "player" in the hemisphere. Canada seems entirely receptive to greater cooperation with the U.S. -- although it will not want to be doing projects as the U.S.' "little brother" or solely at U.S. behest -- as long as such collaboration also serves to raise Canada's profile and effectiveness in the Caribbean.



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